

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, YO
SUBJECT: US/YUGOSLAV ECONOMIC COUNCIL MEETING, DUBROVNIK, JUNE 4-7

1. EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT BOTH DESIRABLE AND APPROPRIATE FOR SECRETARY KREPS TO SEND GREETING MESSAGE TO U.S./YUGOSLAV ECONOMIC COUNCIL ON OCCASION OF 4TH ANNUAL MEETING IN DUBROVNIK ON JUNE 4-7. MESSAGE COULD BE READ AT OPENING SESSION OF MEETING ON MORNING OF JUNE 5, BY US CHAIRMAN PETER GREER FOR EXAMPLE, AS IS CUSTOMARY AT JOINT ECONOMIC COUNCIL MEETINGS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. SUGGESTED TEXT IS TRANSMITTED FOR USDOC COMMENT/CLEARANCE IN PARA 3.

2. WE ALSO SUGGEST THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY WEIL, SINCE HE IS UNABLE TO ATTEND MEETING AND WILL BE US CO-CHAIRMAN OF WASHINGTON-BASED JOINT ECONOMIC WORKING GROUP, SEND LONGER ADDRESS TO MEETING. THIS COULD BE EITHER DELIVERED BY STANSBURY OR DISTRIBUTED TO MEMBERS DURING MEETING. SUGGEST TEXT FOLLOWS IN PARA 4.

3. BEGIN TEXT OF KREPS MESSAGE:
MEMBERS OF THE U.S./YUGOSLAV ECONOMIC COUNCIL:
I EXTEND BEST WISHES TO YOU ON THE OCCASION OF YOUR 4TH ANNUAL MEETING IN DUBROVNIK. SINCE THE U.S./YUGOSLAV COUNCIL
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WAS FORMED IN 1974, IT HAS BEEN MAKING IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EXPANSION OF US/YUGOSLAV TRADE AND BUSINESS COOPERATION. WE AT THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT COMMEND YOUR EFFORTS AND OFFER OUR SUPPORT AND COOPERATION.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOSTERS TRADE RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD. WE ENCOURAGE FOREIGN COMPANIES TO BUY AND SELL IN OUR MARKET. WE BELIEVE THAT TRADE SHOULD NOT

ONLY RESULT IN MUTUAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS BUT ALSO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLES. YOUR MEETING, WHICH BRINGS TOGETHER HIGH LEVEL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND BUSINESSMEN FROM IMPORTANT SEGMENTS OF OUR RESPECTIVE BUSINESS COMMUNITIES, IS A PRACTICAL STEP TOWARD ACHIEVING BOTH THESE GOALS.

I WISH YOU SUCCESS IN YOUR BUSINESS DISCUSSIONS.
END TEXT.

4. BEGIN TEXT OF WEIL ADDRESS:

THE MARKET ECONOMIES OF THE WORLD ARE FACED WITH CRUCIAL CHOICES ON HOW THEY WILL REGULATE TRADE AMONG THEMSELVES. A CENTRAL QUESTION FOR MANY INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES IS WHETHER THEY WANT TO MOVE CLOSER TO A FREE INTERNATIONAL MARKET BY REDUCING TARIFFS AND REMOVING OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS TO TRADE. SOME DO NOT AND WOULD CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN A VARIETY OF RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE TO PROTECT LOCAL PRODUCERS AGAINST WORLD COMPETITION. OTHERS ARE WILLING TO MOVE TOWARD FREER TRADE BUT ONLY WITHIN A LIMITED RANGE OF PRODUCTS OR ONLY WITH COUNTRIES WITH WHICH THEY HAVE A SPECIAL POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP. INFLUENTIAL GROUPS IN SOME COUNTRIES ARE EVEN QUESTIONING WHETHER FREER TRADE IS A DESIRABLE GOAL.

THE WAY IN WHICH THE TRADE ISSUE IS FINALLY RESOLVED WILL HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL COUNTRIES BUT PARTICULARLY THE LESS DEVELOPED AND THOSE IN THE HIGHER STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT, SUCH AS YUGOSLAVIA. THESE COUNTRIES

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NEED ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT TO MODERNIZE THEIR ECONOMIES AND SUBSTANTIALLY RAISE THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THEIR CITIZENS. YET A CONTINUATION OF THE PRESENT REGIME OF IMPORT BARRIERS IN ADVANCED ECONOMIES, OR WORSE, A RAISING OF THESE BARRIERS, WILL LIMIT THE OPPORTUNITIES OF LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO INCREASE THEIR EXPORTS AND, AS A RESULT OF THEIR REDUCED PAYMENTS CAPABILITY, ALSO LIMIT THE INTRODUCTION OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT.

AMERICA REMAINS A STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF FREER TRADE, OF BOTH AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS, WITH MARKET ECONOMIES OF EVERY REGION OF THE WORLD. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS DEMONSTRATED A COMMITMENT TO THIS PRINCIPLE OF SEVERAL

RECENT OCCASIONS. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASED TARIFFS AND OUTRIGHT QUOTAS ON CERTAIN PRODUCTS HAVE BEEN REJECTED BY THE PRESIDENT, DESPITE INTENSE PRESSURE FROM SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS. LIKEWISE THE PRESIDENT HAS OPPOSED REDUCING THE NUMBER OF DUTY-FREE ITEMS PERMITTED TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, INCLUDING YUGOSLAVIA, UNDER AMERICA'S GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES. AS A RESULT, THE DUTY-FREE LIST HAS REMAINED SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT AND WILL LIKELY REMAIN SO IN THE FUTURE. AMERICA'S COMMITMENT TO FREER TRADE HAS ALSO BEEN DEMONSTRATED

AT THE CURRENT ROUND OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA. THE U.S. DELEGATION HEADED BY AMBASSADOR STRAUSS HAS BEEN QUITE FORCEFUL IN ARTICULATING AMERICA'S SUPPORT FOR A REDUCTION OF TARIFFS ON A WIDE RANGE OF INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND FOR THE REMOVAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS TO TRADE. IT HAS ALSO OFFERED A PACKAGE OF CONCRETE MEASURES FOR ACHIEVING THESE GOALS.

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THE U.S. GOVERNMENT VIEWS THE FREE TRADE PRINCIPLE AS APPLYING TO TECHNOLOGY AS WELL AS GOODS AND SERVICES. WE RECOGNIZE THAT ACCESS TO MODERN TECHNOLOGY IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO EXPAND THEIR ECONOMIES AND BUILD INDUSTRIES THAT CAN COMPETE IN THE WORLD MARKET. WE INTEND IN THE FUTURE TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE YUGOSLAVIA AS WELL AS OTHER DEVELOPING MARKET ECONOMIES WITH ACCESS TO SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGY OF U.S. COMPANIES. I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS SOME CONCERN AMONG YUGOSLAV AND AMERICAN FIRMS REGARDING THE LENGTHY PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING LICENSES TO EXPORT STRATEGIC PRODUCTS AND TECHNOLOGY. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THESE CLEARANCE PROCEDURES, WHICH INVOLVE SEVERAL AGENCIES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, CAN BE STREAMLINED AND LENGTHY DELAYS WHICH ARE COSTLY TO FIRMS ON BOTH SIDES, ELIMINATED.

AMERICA TODAY IS ONE OF THE MOST OPEN MARKETS IN THE WORLD, HAVING RELATIVELY FEW QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE AND LOW TARIFFS. THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS TO THIS GENERAL RULE, HOWEVER, AND WE ADMIT THIS. CERTAIN AMERICAN INDUSTRIES HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY HARD HIT BY COMPETITION FROM IMPORTS. THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN TEXTILE AND SHOE WORKERS, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE LOST

THEIR JOBS BECAUSE THEIR COMPANIES COULD NOT COMPETE WITH FOREIGN SUPPLIERS. MANY OTHER INDUSTRIES HAVE ALSO BEEN ADVERSELY AFFECTED. OUR GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED ABOUT THESE JOB LOSSES
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AND THE ANGUISH IS PARTICULARLY GREAT FOR CERTAIN GROUPS OF WORKERS, SUCH AS TEXTILE AND SHOE WORKERS, WHO HAVE EXTREME DIFFICULTY IN FINDING NEW EMPLOYMENT BECAUSE THEY ARE RELATIVELY UNSKILLED, TEND TO BE OLDER, AND OFTEN LIVE IN INDUSTRIALLY UNDERDEVELOPED AREAS.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS MAKING A MAJOR EFFORT TO OVERCOME THE WORKER DISLOCATION AND BUSINESS DISRUPTIONS CAUSED BY CHANGING TRADE PATTERNS THROUGH SPECIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. FOR EXAMPLE THE TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR WORKERS, WHICH IS ADMINISTERED BY THE LABOR DEPARTMENT, PROVIDES WORKERS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS BECAUSE OF IMPORT COMPETITION WITH A SPECIAL PACKAGE OF BENEFITS. THESE INCLUDE HIGHER CASH BENEFITS FOR UNEMPLOYMENT, JOB RETRAINING AND ASSISTANCE IN RELOCATING TO A NEW JOB. THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT ADMINISTERS A SIMILAR PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE TO FIRMS AFFECTED BY IMPORTS TO HELP THEM BECOME MORE COMPETITIVE AND REORIENT THEIR PRODUCTION PROGRAMS TO AREAS WITH BETTER SALES PROSPECTS.

I MENTION THESE TWO PROGRAMS BECAUSE THEY REFLECT AMERICA'S APPROACH TO DEALING WITH THE TEMPORARY ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH FREER TRADE. OVER THE YEARS WE HAVE MORE OFTEN THAN NOT SOUGHT NON-RESTRICTIVE WAYS TO OVERCOME THESE PROBLEMS, AND THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION IS COMMITTED TO TAKING THIS APPROACH IN THE FUTURE. I WOULD ADD THAT WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY YUGOSLAVIA'S RESTRAINT IN DEALING WITH ITS OWN TRADE PROBLEMS. YOUR GOVERNMENT'S DECISION NOT TO IMPLEMENT QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS, IN THE FACE OF PARTICULARLY LARGE TRADE DEFICITS, REFLECTS A CONFIDENCE IN THE BASIC COMPETITIVE ABILITY OF THE ECONOMY AND A REALIZATION THAT THESE MEASURES CAN BE COUNTREPRODUCTIVE IN THE LONG TERM.

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ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT WAYS IN WHICH AMERICAN CAN HELP YUGOSLAVIA OVERCOME ITS TRADE DIFFICULTIES AND CONTRIBUTE TO ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS BY MAINTAINING, AND IMPROVING ON, ITS OPEN MARKET POLICY. I THINK IT CAN BE SAID THAT IN LARGE MEASURE BECAUSE OF AMERICA'S OPEN MARKET, TRADE BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES HAS BEEN RELATIVELY BALANCED IN RECENT

YEARS. IN 1977, ACCORDING TO U.S. STATISTICS, AMERICAN FIRMS SOLD 355 MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF GOODS TO YUGOSLAV ENTERPRISES, AND YUGOSLAV FIRMS SOLD 336 MILLION DOLLARS IN AMERICA. I UNDERSTAND THAT OFFICIAL YUGOSLAV STATISTICS DIFFER FROM OURS AND HOPE THAT THE SOURCES OF THIS DISCREPANCY CAN BE SOON DETERMINED. I AM ENCOURAGED, HOWEVER, EVEN BY THOSE STATISTICS BECAUSE THEY SHOW U.S.-YUGOSLAV TRADE TO BE IN BETTER BALANCE THAN TRADE WITH YUGOSLAV'S OTHER MAJOR HARD CURRENCY TRADING PARTNERS.

I THINK ALL OF YOU WOULD CONCUR WITH ME THAT THE VOLUME OF OUR TRADE IS NOT AS HIGH AS IT COULD BE. ONLY A RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF YUGOSLAV AND AMERICAN FIRMS ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE VERY SUBSTANTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRADE AND BUSINESS COOPERATION WHICH EXIST IN OUR RESPECTIVE MARKETS. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE AN INCREASE IN ACTIVITIES ON BOTH SIDES. THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT IS PLEASED THEREFORE TO PARTICIPATE IN FORA SUCH AS THIS WHICH BRING U.S. AND YUGOSLAV FIRMS TOGETHER TO DISCUSS CONCRETE BUSINESS PROPOSALS, AND PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY, PARTICULARLY VALUABLE FOR FIRMS NEW TO EACH OTHER'S MARKET, TO BECAUSE ACQUAINTED WITH THE LAWS, BUSINESS PRACTICES AND INDUSTRIES OF THE OTHER. THE LARGE TURNOUT HERE TODAY REFLECTS THE IMPORTANCE WHICH YOU AS BUSINESSMEN ATTACHE TO THIS KIND OF PERSONAL CONTACT AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION.

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EARLIER I MENTIONED AMERICA'S GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES WHICH IS FREQUENTLY CALLED SIMPLY GSP. I WOULD LIKE TO PROVIDE SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THIS PROGRAM BECAUSE IT APPEARS THAT MANY YUGOSLAV ENTERPRISES ARE NOT

FAMILIAR WITH HOW IT WORKS AND THE KINDS OF PRODUCTS WHICH ARE COVERED. THE GSP IS A SPECIAL PROGRAM ENACTED BY CONGRESS TO ASSIST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD IN INCREASING THEIR EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES. UNDER THIS PROGRAM FIRMS IN 97 ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES MAY EXPORT TO THE UNITED STATES DUTY-FREE OVER 2,700 DIFFERENT PRODUCTS. THE LIST INCLUDES A VARIETY OF FOOD PRODUCTS, CHEMICALS, WOOD AND PAPER PRODUCTS, METALS AND METAL PRODUCTS, MACHINERY, SPORTING EQUIPMENT AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL AND CONSUMER PRODUCTS. THERE ARE LIMITS ON THE VALUE OF SUCH DUTY-FREE EXPORTS. EXPORTS MAY NOT EXCEED AN ANNUAL CEILING FOR ANY SINGLE CATEGORY OF PRODUCTS. THIS FIGURE, HOWEVER, IS ADJUSTED EVERY YEAR FOR INFLATION. NOR MAY EXPORTS IN ANY SINGLE PRODUCT CATEGORY AMOUNT TO MORE THAN 50 PERCENT OF TOTAL U.S. IMPORTS. DESPITE THEIR LIMITATIONS THE TOTAL VALUE OF GSP IMPORTS CAN STILL BE QUITE SUBSTANTIAL, PARTICULARLY IN THE CONTEXT OF TOTAL U.S.A YUGOSLAV TRADE. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE YUGOSLAV ENTERPRISES TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS PROGRAM.

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THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE OFFERS A NUMBER OF SERVICES TO AMERICAN AND FOREIGN BUSINESSMEN TO PROMOTE TRADE AND BUSINESS COOPERATION. FOR EXAMPLE, THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT'S TRADE OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM, YUGOSLAV BUYERS CAN BE, VERY QUICKLY, BROUGHT IN CONTACT WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF U.S. POTENTIAL SUPPLIERS. INFORMATION ON TRADE OPPORTUNITIES GIVEN TO COMMERCIAL OFFICERS AT THE EMBASSY AND CONSULATE IS TRANSMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT WHERE IT IS FED INTO A COMPUTER AND DISSEMINATED TO A SELECTED GROUP OF U.S. FIRMS WITHIN A GIVEN INDUSTRIAL BRANCH IN A MATTER OF DAYS. IN ANOTHER PROGRAM THE DEPARTMENT PROVIDES TO AMERICAN FIRMS--WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE EMBASSY, CONSULATE AND YUGOSLAV CHAMBER OF ECONOMY--INFORMATION ON THE ACTIVITIES OF INDIVIDUAL YUGOSLAV ENTERPRISES. IN THIS WAY U.S. FIRMS CAN BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH POTENTIAL YUGOSLAV TRADING PARTNERS BEFORE THEY TRAVEL TO YUGOSLAVIA.

THE DEPARTMENT ALSO TRIES TO ENCOURAGE BUSINESS CONTACTS BY SPONSORING A VARIETY OF EXHIBITIONS AND SEMINARS. IN RECENT YEARS WE HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY ACTIVE IN THIS AREA IN YUGOSLAVIA. IN 1977, MAJOR EXHIBITIONS WERE HELD AT THE NOVI SAD AGRICULTURAL FAIR AND THE ZAGREB FALL FAIR. ANOTHER MAJOR EXHIBITION IS SCHEDULED FOR THE ZAGREB FALL FAIR THIS YEAR AND WILL FEATURE INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITS OF ABOUT 20 U.S. FIRMS, A DISPLAY AND SEMINAR ON U.S. COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND A SPECIAL VIDEO TAPE PRESENTATION ON THE LATEST U.S. PACKAGING EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS. WE ARE ALSO CONSIDERING EXHIBITIONS AT THE LJUBLJANA AND BELGRADE FAIRS IN THE COMING YEARS.

THE DEPARTMENT'S TECHNIAL SALES SEMINAR PROGRAM HAS BEEN
QUITE SUCCESSFUL IN YUGOSLAVIA AND PROVED TO BE AN
EXCELLENT WAY OF INFORMING YUGOSLAV BUSINESSMEN AND TECHNICIANS
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OF THE LATEST EVELOPMENTS IN U.S. TECHNOLOGY AS WELL AS ENCOURAGING
CONCRETE BUSINESS DISCUSSIONS ON CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS. TWO VERY WELL ATTENDED SEMINARS WERE HELD EARLIER
THIS YEAR AND IN THE FALL OTHERS ARE SCHEDULED ON MEAT AND DAIRY
PROCESSING, WELDING TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS.
TO THE EXTENT THAT THERE CONTINUES TO BE KEEN INTEREST WITHIN THE
YUGSLAV BUSINESS COMMUNITY, WE WILL BE ORGANIZING OTHERS IN
THE FUTURE.

OUR EFFORTS AND THOSE OF THE YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER,
CAN ONLY SUPPLEMENT YOUR OWN AS BUSINESSMEN. ULTIMATELY,
SUCCESS IN EXPLOITING TRADE AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR
RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES AN IN THIRD MARKETS DEPENDS ON
THE VIGOR AND IMAGINATION WITH WHICH YOU PURSUE YOUR
COMMERCIAL PROMOTION ACTIVITIES. TO DATE, AS IS INDICATED
BY THE NUMBER OF JOINT VENTURES AND LONG-TERM
COOPERATION AGREEMENTS AND INCREASED EXPORT SALES,
SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN EXPANDING AND
DEEPENING U.S.-YUGOSLAV ECONOMIC TIES. WE SALUTE THESE
EFFORTS. AT THE SAME TIME WE FEEL THAT MORE CAN BE
DONE AND HOPE THAT THIS MEETING WILL SERVE TO FOSTER CLOSER
BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS AND STIMULATE DIALOGUES WHICH WILL
LEAD TO CONCRETE BUSINESS RESULTS AND RAISE THE LEVEL
OF INVOLVEMENT OF FIRMS IN BOTH COUNTRIES.
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